



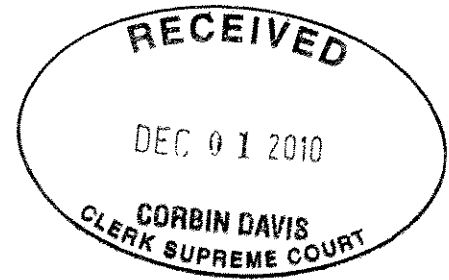
500 WOODWARD AVENUE, SUITE 4000  
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226-3425  
TELEPHONE: (313) 223-3500  
FACSIMILE: (313) 223-3598  
<http://www.dickinsonwright.com>

RICK A. HABERMAN  
RHaberman@dickinsonwright.com  
(313) 223-3676

November 30, 2010

Via Federal Express

Corbin Davis  
Clerk of the Court  
Michigan Supreme Court  
P.O. Box 30052  
Lansing, MI 48909



Re: Proposed Revision to MRPC 6.1

Mr. Davis:

I write this letter in my individual capacity based upon my experience as the Pro Bono Coordinator for Dickinson Wright PLLC. Specifically, I urge the Court to adopt Alternative B as proposed by the State Bar's Representative Assembly and revised by the Supreme Court. My reasons are fourfold.

First, Alternative B is a valuable source of information for the Bar with respect to pro bono activity. Unlike its predecessor, Alternative B offers extensive commentary regarding an attorney's professional responsibility and the types of activities that may discharge that responsibility. Alternative B places a wealth of important information in one place. In my view this not only aids the individual lawyer who wishes to perform pro bono work, it also assists law firms who wish to create a pro bono program with uniform and consistent practices.

Second, Alternative B makes it clear that a lawyer's primary obligation is to perform legal work on behalf of those who cannot afford representation. In my experience, too many lawyers confuse pro bono legal work with general charitable activity, public service, and business development activities. This State has serious shortcomings in the access to justice afforded its low income citizens. Lawyers have the greatest impact on that situation when they contribute their legal services. By focusing lawyers specifically on legal work, as opposed to a generalized concept of community service, Alternative B encourages lawyers to put their skills to their highest and best use.

Third, I believe Alternative B's focus on the poor is not only appropriate but necessary. One need not look very far to recognize that it is the poor that face the greatest barriers in finding adequate representation. Targeting pro bono efforts to those most in need does not politicize pro bono work so much as focus our palliative efforts accurately on the wound we wish to heal. The idea that all citizens have the right to representation and redress has been a pillar of our democratic culture for generations regardless of party affiliation or ideology. While one can name numerous groups that an individual lawyer may find admirable and thus may want to

C O U N S E L O R S   A T   L A W

DETROIT   NASHVILLE   WASHINGTON, D.C.   TORONTO   PHOENIX   LAS VEGAS  
BLOOMFIELD HILLS   ANN ARBOR   LANSING   GRAND RAPIDS

Corbin Davis  
November 30, 2010  
Page 2

represent, it is impoverished individuals and shoestring-budget-non-profit organizations that need representation.<sup>1</sup>

Lastly, I note that available statistics show a wide range of compensation among Michigan's far flung Bar. That said, it is undeniable that the privilege of practicing law provides many lawyers with incomes in the upper reaches of the national distribution. For that reason, the proposed change in the suggested financial commitment to organizations providing pro bono services is much needed.

In closing, I urge you to adopt Alternative B.

Very truly yours,



Rick A. Haberman

RAH/RAH

---

<sup>1</sup> I will also note that, in my experience, many of the groups Justice Markman enumerates can be served, and in fact are served, under a policy based on financial need.